



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of Maryland*

*Thomas M. DiBiagio
United States Attorney*

*Northern Division
6625 United States Courthouse
101 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-2692*

*410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4856
FAX 410-962-0693*

*Southern Division
400 United States Courthouse
6500 Cherrywood Lane
Greenbelt, MD 20770-1249*

*301-344-4433
301-344-4422
FAX 301-344-4516*

**NOVEMBER 5, 2004
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION CONTACT
VICKIE E. LEDUC, AUSA
410-209-4885**

**MEMBERS OF BALTIMORE AREA DRUG CONSPIRACY
FOUND GUILTY ON ALL COUNTS**

Baltimore, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that a jury returned guilty verdicts today on all counts against Bernard Christian, age 34, of Pikesville, Maryland; Kenneth Mitchell, age 30, of Edgewood, Maryland; and Ralph K Williams., Jr., age 30, of Baltimore, Maryland in a federal drug conspiracy case.

According to evidence presented at the two week trial before the Honorable Catherine C. Blake, between June of 2001 and March of 2003, a large drug ring conspired to bring hundreds of kilograms of cocaine into Baltimore from Los Angeles. The defendants and their associates used overnight parcel carriers as a primary means of sending money to Los Angeles and shipping drugs to Baltimore. Christian was employed as a driver for Federal Express. His regular route was the Johns Hopkins Hospital Center. Christian routinely intercepted packages laden with cocaine which he delivered to others for distribution.

According to trial evidence, Mitchell and Williams traveled frequently to California to

deliver money but were generally responsible for the distribution of cocaine in Baltimore and the collection of proceeds from those sales. The jury found that the conspiracy involved at least 300 kilograms of cocaine which was distributed in Baltimore and found that the government was entitled to forfeit drug proceeds in the amount of \$6 million from the defendants. The jury also found Mitchell and Williams to be leaders and organizers within the conspiracy and that Christian had abused a position of trust when he used his job at Federal Express to facilitate, as well as conceal, the criminal conduct.

As a result of the verdicts returned today, all of the defendants face a maximum penalty of life in prison. Judge Blake scheduled sentencing for Christian and Mitchell on February 4, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., respectively. Williams is scheduled for sentencing on February 25 at 9:30 a.m.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force in Baltimore and Los Angeles; the Maryland State Police, the Anne Arundel County Police Department; the Burbank, California Police Department; the Baltimore County Police Department; and Baltimore City Police Department. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney James G. Warwick and Special Assistant United States Attorney James T. Wallner.